

EGGNOG

IVERHADTHISISSUEINTHEWORKFORLITERALLYMONTHSNOWANDFINALLYIGETTO TYPEITALLUP

EGGNOG #54 is a product of the Crossroads Press International, 11416 Parkview Lane, Hales Corners, WI 53130 U.S.A. The Editor is Konrad Baumeister. EGGNOG normally appears every four weeks and sells at the rate of 10/\$3.50, just as it always has. There will never again be any game openings. All articles are "paid" for via subscription extensions. This is a special issue, published off of the normal schedule so as to let everybody know of the status of my Diplomacy hobby involvement. This is EGGNOG Enterprises Production #127. Thankyew...

EVERYSO OFTEN I FIND MYSELF AT A LOSS FOR WORDS BUT THIS IS DEFINITELY NOT ONE OF THOSE TIMES

THE OVERSTUFFED RECLINER

(THE EDITOR'S COLUMN)

This, as the above clearly states in blue and green, is the column of this editor. It is the least important feature, which is why it is the best-written.

MUSICAL COMMENTARY

King Crimson was the most impressive marriage of intelligence and musical adventure to arise out of the "art-rock" period of 1967-72. Not only was it the quintessential British experimental band, but King Crimson also served as a training ground for some of the finest rock musicians to come out of the United Kingdom during that period. Passing through the King's court at one time or another were such mainstays as Greg Lake (of Emerson, Lake & Palmer, later Lake), Ian McDonald and Mike Giles (who formed McDonald & Giles; later McDonald became a member of Foreigner), Boz Burrell (Bad Company), Mel Collins (Kokono) Bill Bruford (Yes), and John Wetton (of Family).

Crimson was largely the realization of the dream of guitar genius Robert Fripp, an erratic rock intel-

lect who could slide from rock-oriented tunes to classically-inspired numbers with the wink of a bespectacled eye. Fripp had begun his career in 1967 as one third of the short-lived pop troupe Giles, Giles & Fripp, which featured Robert along with brothers Mike and Peter Giles. The band's recording career was disastrous and Peter left show business altogether.

Fripp and the other Giles, however, went on to form King Crimson. By January of 1969, the five members were busy rehearsing. By the time Crimson played the Speakeasy in London (in April), word had spread that this band was the next underground hit. In July, the well-honed King devastated a crowd of over fifty thousand at the Rolling Stones' Hyde Park freebie. With the subsequent release of their first LP, In The Court Of The Crimson King, the group firmly established themselves as being one of the big newcomers of 1969 (with Yes, Led Zeppelin, etc).

Their sound was ambitious, stark, lyrically mesmerizing, and powerful. As the band's following mushroomed, the constant reshuffling of members

began in earnest. Gilas and McDonald decided to leave during Crimson's first United States tour. Iake left to join MLF shortly thereafter. With Fripp at the reins, Crimson's second album, In The Wake Of Paganism, was completed with the help of a lot of friends and transients King Crimson members. When a new group finally did emerge in some sort of solidified state, it consisted of Fripp, Mel Collins, Marc Charig, Keith Tippett, Andy McCulloch, Pete Sinfield and Gordon Haskell. Haskell was out by the time the third Crimson album was released (Lizard), and the rest of the band was jettisoned as well.

Bob Burrell, a singer who could not play bass at all, was hired by Fripp as a bassist. Fripp actually taught him how to play. Ian Wallace appeared on drums. This Crimson was shortlived, and the introspective, progressive Fripp found himself being a one-man band, literally. Going into hibernation for nearly a year, Fripp returned with a new, improved King Crimson that proved, musically, to be the strongest ensemble to date. Ex-Yesman Bill Bruford was handling the drumming, David Cross was on keyboards, John Wetton played bass and sang and Gaine Muir offered percussion. Muir soon fled the music scene and Crimson continued as a foursome, producing some of the most enigmatic, wondrous rock-jazz-folk meanderings ever recorded.

Crimson was going strong in this reincarnation when Fripp, in 1974, decided to allow the band to dissolve. Thus, one of the most anarchistic, creative, and revered bands in rock's history floated away amid a sea of musical confusion.

Robert Fripp has since released several inspired and critically acclaimed solo LPs, none of which has broken any records sales-wise.

GREEN PAPER

Yeah. I think you who liked the green paper I printed on months ago will

like this stuff as well. It took a while to find, and I went out of my way for it, but then again...

STANDBY LIST IS GROWING

We now have, in no particular order, Bob Klinge, Eric Verheiden, Phil Cooper, Ron Kelly, Larry Boudon, Ray Ciani, Robert Cheek, Walt Aucott, Tom Huret, John Zipper, Eric Ozog, Bob Osuch, Scott Hansen, Keith Kendall, Ken Iverson, and Bill Sparks on our list. If anyone wants on or off, just say so. It's the only way to get into an EGGNOG game, and I mean that literally, as there will never again be any formal game openings.

WELL, SCREW THE GREEN

Old-timers out in EGGNOG-land may remember that some ancient EGGNOG issues were printed on pink paper. Somehow it's fitting...

HOBBY HANDBOOK PROJECT

The North American Diplomacy Federation plans to publish an Annual Hobby Handbook commencing in 1981. We are at present looking for an editor willing and qualified to accomplish such a project from initial conception through to printing and distribution. Anyone interested should contact the NADF through Rod Walker, 1273 Crest Dr., Encinitas, CA 92024. Please include a general plan for the contents of such a handbook if you were to edit it...specifically, what topics would you cover; whether original or reprint material would be used, and in what proportions; if reprints are to be used, what access you have to older hobby material; reproduction method; probable cost estimate. Deadline for submission is 1 November 1980.

BACK ISSUES OF THE CROSSROADS PRESS

Back issues still here are as follows:

EGGNOG: #21, 30, 41, 43-46, 50, 52-53

POLITICIAN: 10-12

All sold for 20¢/issue. Buy 'em!

1978 STATEMENTS PART II

FOR PAGEDES (Italy): I really do not have all that much to say about 1978T. It started out all right, I guess; at least, it seemed interesting, for my first experience with Diplomacy by mail. I must say, though, that I was rather disappointed in Conrad Struckman and John Nachir. I do not know just what was behind all the accusations going around, but these two seem to have taken the whole game too seriously; yet they played their respective countries rather poorly, in my opinion. I can only thank Bill Osmandson and Ron Kelly for playing a more or less hopeless Turkish position for as long as each one did, although by doing so, they certainly made things harder for me. I was understandably not happy when Cliff Mann handed over the remainder of the hopeless English position to France, but I can accept his reasons.

Darrell Houston handled the Austrian position as well as could be expected for the first few moves, given his situation. Had it not been for the series of NMRs, the entry of the new Turkish player might have given the Austrian cause a fighting chance.

The draw vote was necessary in the end. Bob came very close to breaking through my lines in the south, and had he done so, a German-French split might have been achieved; or perhaps Uli, resourceful as he seems to be, could have worked a deal. As it was, though, no one could really afford to betray the one ally he had, and neither coalition was likely to get much further; at least, that's the way it seemed to me. Uli was a pretty good ally, although I have my doubts regarding his intentions at times. I would also like to thank Phil and Bob (especially Bob) for what I think was a well-played game. I know my communications fell down in the later stages of the game; and I apologize for that. It seemed to happen to almost everyone, though; there just wasn't a lot to be said anymore. The hiatus when The Ninth Circle folded didn't

help either; a pity about that, as it was a fine magazine.

Well, I guess that's about all I have to say on the subject. I will leave the thorough game analysis to the experts (I'm sure Uli considers himself one). It was interesting, maybe I'll do it again sometime (when I'm a little more settled) and just possibly I'll face some of you fellows again. Until such time -- happy wheeling and dealing.

This one came in just after press time for last issue. Thanks to Tom for providing it.

LETTER COLUMN

From John Mih-HOLL-ski (7-26): I was flattered that you chose my Brutus Bulletin as a sample case for your blast at letter persons called to standby have the option of accepting or passing on the call without being listed as player of record if they decline. ((Well, I couldn't take anybody else's BB, so I had to take yours.)) In many respects your criticisms don't really apply to the BB in reality, but I am willing to defend the other side in the "general case" anyhow, as I'm sure that's what you meant to attack. ((In the immortal words of Eric Clapton, "Right you are.")) The reasons that come to mind that might 'exempt' BB at least in part are that the current games are the last in which I will ever use standbys; I agree with Jerry Jones that the games are much fairer and better all around without them as a matter of policy. ((Ever the joker! You are joking, right?)) Next, my games are fast games, being 14, 10 and now and then, 7 day deadlines. ((Really only 6, given Sundays not having any mail delivery. This is rarely enough time to receive adjudications (3 days is the norm) and mail them back after a day of studying the position (adding up to 4 days; plus

3 days makes 7 days minimum out of a 6 day deadline. Another name for such a game is "non-negotiation Diplomacy.") These faster paced games keep the interest up much more than the simple halving (or more) of the term between deadlines, as the few number of drops historically in the pages of BB amply illustrate. ((If you want to turn this into a self-made plug, why not tell me so? I run games on 28 day deadlines, and my record of drops is just as low as yours is...)) Finally, the big name, professional standbys are not on my mailing list, with no more positions coming open, I doubt that they will spend the considerable money to wait and watch.

But, on the the matter of policy in the general case. It seems to me that to force your standby players to take any dog of a position is to seriously misuse the services that they favpr you with. And standing by IS certainly a favor to the GM, for it sure is no big joy to the recipient in most cases, as anyone who has ever stood by knows. ((I used to be one of the people you call "professional standbys, and entered scores of games as such, with the vast majority of positions certain losses. If I wouldn't have had fun I wouldn't have done it in the first place. To play out a standby position can be potentially very satisfying. Another successful player who knows well the joys of "hopeless" standby positions is Eric Verheiden.)) OK, so Joe Blow standbys, gets called for a 3 or 4 center power (your 6 is generous; I'd feel lucky to draw a 4 as a standby), tries to pick up the pieces, slugs it out, but eventually gets blwon away. Good try. The only trouble is, this is putting ALL the work and ALL the burden and ALL the onus of failure on the GOOD guy, the standby. If he can turn it around, he deserves a LOT of credit. If (usually "when") he fails, the discredit for a wipeout properly belongs on the weak personality that dropped the spot with the first ill wind to begin with. ((What Jogn is saying is, of course,

ridiculous, and displays total ignorance of rating lists, and how credit is given in succeed/failure cases for standby players. The standby cannot lose; he literally cannot hurt himself by taking on a losing position. Yes, all the work of resurrecting the position goes to the standby...every single person who ever volunteered the service knows that, and is willing to do the work; if he didn't want to work on the position, he wouldn't volunteer, obviously. Yes, he gets all the burden as well...but doesn't that fit under "work." John? No, he decidedly does not get any of the "onus of failure". Rating lists do not penalize stadby players who do poorly on the whole; they do reward them for doing well. If the position does poorly, then the original player is always rated for it, and the discredit goes to him. Not to the standby. It never did; I have no idea why you thought that it ever did. So, a standby cannot lose even if wiped off the board right after taking the position; more often he is credited for trying, and respected, even if he fails.)) Next, it makes it harder for the players who are doing their part to rid the board of the abandoned land, as a live player will botch the whole game status. ((Huh? To what does this statement refer? Game status would be perfect if we simply signed up 7 CD positions in S01, according to this statement.)) This CAN be a good thing, but not more often than not, I think. Mainly, when 7 people sign up for a game, they are taking their chances and making their own choices. If you ally with a dummy who pouts and runs away at a bad turn of events, you deserve the troubles of a suddenly CD ally you chose to work with. ((OK, if you want to change the subject, go ahead, but at least start a new paragraph. What about a perfect ally who has to go to the hospital for a few months and therefore has to drop the game?

Or when someone goes on a long trip, and can't keep up the game? Not everybody drops just because he's doing poorly, despite what you may think John.) If he's on the far side of the board, that's the breaks: they have the opportunities/troubles of a free feast or vanished supporting partner instead of you. The luck of the draw might have put our pouting friend on your side, but didn't. ((Obviously, it's never happened to you, John, or you'd think otherwise.)) If you force a standby to become player of record, you ENCOURAGE the gutless and shallow to drop positions as soon as the wind turns cold. ((Why? The original player gets rated for his performance, and the replacement simply gets rated and credited if he did well, not if he fails. We've gone over this before, haven't we...)) If you let a standby choose whether to fill in or not, the person who dropped a dog spot as not worth a dime card to resign from gets nailed with the onus of "dro F06, CD, out F07". This is the way it should be, and on its own is the strongest argument for allowing this policy. As for the professional standby waiting for a sure win to drop into his lap, hell, let him sit back and subscribe and wait for that 17 center spot you bandy about to come to him. I suspect he may well see more than one 'zine come and go before he ever gets it! "Great policy, isn't it?" You bet! ((Actually, sure wins have been given away frequently in the past. The records are filled with 13-15 center drops, believe it or not. I once took over a 15 center position, and of course won immediately thereafter. In Graustark a month or two ago, David Joy dropped a 16 center England, with a sure win for the standby. There is a famous game played under the 1961 majority of units rule where all the player had to do was send in his build to win the game, and dropped. So, John, it does happen. Too often, in fact. Methinks it's time to get Mark Berch in on this one...)))

RATHER IMPORTANT CHANGE OF ADDRESS

...and events in general, I might add (I might also not add). After August 23rd, I will be totally incommunicado, and nobody is going to hear from me at all, in all probability. Write me at my home address, but don't expect an answer right away, in any case.

On September 1, 1980, and onwards, I will be living at the following address, and make sure that you have it written down clearly:

Konrad Baumeister
P.O. Box 2231
Room 122, New South Hall
Georgetown University
Washington, D.C. 20057

Got it? I'll be there until December 23rd, 1980, and will be at my home address (Hales Corners) for a few days after that. For most of the time between 23rd December and 13 January we will be out of the country, but if you want to write, send it to Wisconsin. After January 13, I will be back in Washington for several months.

Now. Orders for Games should be sent to Hales Corners if they are expected to be there before 30th August, or to Washington if they will arrive after September 1, 1980. Some people, of course, will ignore this advice, and Uli will end up forwarding some orders around deadline time. The next EGGNOG deadline is September 10, 1980 for those that forgot already... I will adjudicate them in D.C. and will get out EGGNOG #55 as soon as I can after the deadline. Uli will GM the variant games for POLITICIAN but I will type the stuff up here. It's all very simple, it just sounds complicated...trust me.

So don't lose that address. Uli will not be sending every one of you a card every time you misplace it. Be on your toes, and don't miss your moves. And while you're at it, go ahead and read the editorial on Page 6.

IT'S BEEN A DECADE

Konrad's Last Stand

Well, actually it's only been 9 and a half years of involvement in the postal Diplomacy hobby, in one capacity or another, but I thought the above sounded better. For several reasons, it now appears that the Crossroads Press International will (have to) shut down not long after I celebrate (?) that decade of involvement in December 1980.

Basically what it is is that I'm partially tired of/bored by/sick of the Diplomacy hobby. In any case, I can't and won't keep it up much longer. A short history of my involvement, necessarily much abbreviated, is in order I suppose:

I bought my first Diplomacy set (I now have three) in late 1970. At that time it cost me \$5; postage was a few pennies, and 'zines cost a dime or, for the really expensive ones, 15¢ apiece. (Now Diplomacy sets cost around \$15 + \$1.50 postage; stamps will cost 20¢ each in January; and 'zines cost anywhere from 30¢ to 80¢ (no longer uncommon, alas) with Diplomacy World coming around \$1.50 a shot. Ye Ghods! Inflation has something to do with my withdrawal too!) I read some 'zines which a friend of mine was getting for maybe a year, and then I started subscribing to a few 'zines myself. (It was late in 1971 that the first few EGGNOG issues came out...but see EGGNOG #13 for the full story on that.) When I got into the hobby for myself admittedly in a small way, I was having a great time. I felt very young, inexperienced and inconsequential, but as it turned out nobody really cared. I regularly corresponded with publishers under whom I wasn't even playing or writing articles for or anything; just out of friendship and for the fun of it. The hobby was then still fairly young, and people were very excited about what they were doing. I thought to myself that if/when I'd become a publisher I'd want to be just like them.

This excitement was most evident in the 'zines produced at the time. The 'zines put out in the years 1969-'72 (and some of 1973, depending on the publisher; things became more variable, quality as a whole went down, and this trend has never reversed itself since...in fact, it has accelerated its fall) have yet to be surpassed in quality. There is not one single 'zine being put out today that would not look absolutely pitiful when compared to the average 'zine published in 1972 -- not one! This is one reason why I can occasionally be a pain in the ass when I critique someone else's 'zine. He may say that his is one of the best coming out these days, so why am I complaining? Well, he may be right, and the average reader might be very impressed by his product. However, I am always of the opinion that these things can be done better -- simply because they already have been done better...much better in fact.

Anyway, I decided in late '74 or very early '75 (I can't pin a date down anymore because I don't exactly remember...gad, it seems like so long ago!) that I knew enough about the game to play a few standby slots. I loved them, even if I didn't do spectacularly in all of them. In 1976 I think it was, I signed up for my first game as a starting player, having heretofore only played standby positions. In my first few years of playing I made loads of friends; plus I still knew a ton of people from the days before I played actively. I was having a blast. It really is fun to feel like you know everybody who's anybody, even though I didn't...

(A few words in general about these people: the vast majority of Diplomacy players before 1970 came in from science-fiction fandom. They thrived on communication, press writing, and just enjoying themselves in general, outside of the game. Up until 1976 or maybe

1977, many people still thought that way, but the wargamers had entered the field. Now, in 1980 and almost '81, the Wargamers vastly outnumber any other kind of Diplomacy fanatic in the hobby, and the hobby is the worse for it. Wargamers are generally used to playing hex-grid games. Most games are for only two players, so no negotiations are ever needed or even desirable. Press and communications are a waste of time. The only fun the average Wargamer gets from a game of Diplomacy is just that...playing the damned game. There are exceptions, but this is the rule. I abhor it, because it is this type of player who now rules the hobby. This narrow-minded attitude held by the majority of the hobby is one major reason behind my leaving it.)

In any case, the hobby was changing fairly quickly. In quick succession, several friends that I had made between '71 and '73 dropped out of the hobby. (This was mid 1976.) I was rather disillusioned -- losing friends that close hurt a great deal. It changed my view of the Diplomacy hobby to some extent. In any case, it was never to be the same for me again.

But life goes on. I guess that I can see that I've been a fairly successful Diplomacy player; I've got several wins and a handful of draws tucked away, and I've managed to do fairly well with every country (even with Italy; it's not half-bad, as Mike Rocamora might say) besides Austria, which is a country I simply am incapable of playing competently. Eventually, in 1978, I decided to revive EGGNOG Enterprises, which put out those three issues in late 1971 which I mentioned earlier. I quickly found out that I enjoyed publishing far more than I did playing. Perhaps 7 and a half years of familiarity with the game just began to grate on my nerves, but whatever the reason, I just wasn't putting anything into the games anymore. I concentrated, thus, on publishing my various 'zines (always have been

a long-winded s.o.b.) and let my games dwindle. I'm still playing in 8 or 9 games and as a favor to Doug Byerlein took on one more standby position. (My positions went to hell, too; after Lee Kender Sr stabbed me in LDNS game 1978HA, I had not one really promising position left. Sniffle...)

But I didn't care; hell, I was publishing now, and playing was of secondary importance. When I started publishing I was still fairly young...besides which, I've always been sort of paranoid age-wise, however unfounded it was ten years ago...paradoxically, now that I'm ten years older cheap shot artists -- they know who they are -- cannot resist pointing out that I'm not as old as they are. I've always been on the backs of people who started pubbing while they're as young as that, and I've always turned out to be right about them, too. Every one of them folded quickly. The most recent example is Johnny Kelley, of the Beholder. Most people that young are just too immature to take on that kind of responsibility and work for long, pure and simple, and I'll always say that until proven otherwise. When I started I wondered if I was mature enough to do it...frankly, I doubted it. But I said I'd give it a shot and miracle of miracles, it worked out. Over the years, I think I've done a pretty good job as a publisher considering my age; it could have all been very different. I remember well another young publisher who was also pretty prolific, Mark Weidmark. Ah well...

Why did I start? Well, I thought I'd enjoy doing it. I had been gamesmastering for over a year before I started publishing, and had proven that I could do that fairly well. Anybody who tells you that he started a 'zine because he wanted to provide a place for others to play in is feeding you bullshit. Nobody can possibly be that altruistic. Either

they want recognition or an ego boost or to play Ghod or whatever -- with me it was a combination, and like I said it might be fun. It also proved to be a lot of work, but support from the field (paradoxically, more from the subbers than from other pubbers -- there is a new thing in the hobby, a sort of competition among publishers -- some more so than others -- where some people apparently try to get in as many cheap shots as they can without getting any in return for it, and this wasn't the case ten years ago; John Michalski and some others are experts in this field) from the readers helped me along. Thanks go out to them.

Now for pet peeve airing. It seems like a lot of people out there think that they own your 'zine; you just do the work on it, it's really theirs. You wouldn't believe it, but people say things openly like "It's the subbers' 'zine, and they have the say over what goes into it," or "A game belongs to the players, not the Gamesmaster," or other equally idiotic nonsense. Bull! People have occasionally demanded that I print something, or demanded that I do something else for them. Screw you gentlemen, but I am off the conviction that, since I do 101% of the work that goes into EGGNOG and the other 'zines, and always have, I have first and final say over what goes into it, how it looks, everything. No way will I believe that balderdash above! First, of all, EGGNOG Enterprises and the Crossroads Press International have always been my personal property, and I can do with it precisely what I want to. The subscribers don't have a thing to say about it, not a thing. I put out whatever I like, whenever I like, and that's the end of it. It is a nice move on my part to find out what you want to receive in EGGNOG; I don't have to do that. If people like what I put out, then they are quite welcome to trade or subscribe. If they don't like it, then they don't have to get it. So far it seems like many people do like it, so I'm all the

happier for it. It makes me glad to know that you like what you get; but there will always be some who like it and there will always be some who don't; you can't please all the people all the time.

Second, I don't do anything when it is demanded of me. I might consider it if I were politely asked or something likethat, but once a subber starts thinking that he's the boss, he'll find out that he's not. This has happened only a few times, but that kind of insubordination really ticks me off. I maintain what amounts to dictatorial control over the Crossroads Press International...long time subbers know that I'm generally a generous and benevolent dictator (yuk yuk!), but that doesn't change anything. I have always operated at a loss; at least I should be able to have a say over what I lose money on.

A corollary to the above: Bob Osuch remarked in a recent VOD (and I'm sure that there are others of his opinion): "Pubbers do not own the hobby -- their word is not gospel -- they have a tendency to be pompous baboons, arrogant bastards, etc." (He then continued to attack publishers for the rest of the page.) No, pubbers don't own the hobby; on the other hand, neither do the players. The fact is that pubbers do 99% of the work to be done in the hobby; they are entitled to at least using their forums to voice their own opinions. They pay for that right, through the work and loss of money generally involved in publishing. If he doesn't like what he reads, he can cut his subscription to that 'zine. Without publishers and their work, where would the players be? In any case, a pubber's 'zine is his personal possession, and he has the final say on everything. Everything. Not all pubbers exercise that right -- I haven't always -- but they could, if they so wished. EGGNOG's sold circulation of 130 testifies to the fact that the

average player doesn't think he's screwed by this policy. If people thought that it was that horrible, they wouldn't have subscribed. I don't think that many people would say that I've been unfair to them.

In any case, at this point in time (i.e. now) I'm becoming rather bored with publishing and have to get out of the hobby for a variety of reasons.

1) The problem of the high attrition rate of this hobby, mentioned earlier, had a great deal to do with it. Every single person that I knew well in the hobby before 1975 is gone. Bob Hartwig was the last to go, just over a year ago. Despite my being younger than most in this hobby, I feel like an old man sometimes. Hardly anyone has been in this hobby for this long. Since the mid -70s I didn't want to know anybody really well for fear of getting burned. When the hobby was a lot smaller, and I was a kid, I knew 20-30 people well enough to call them real friends. Now I can say that for only a few people...most of whom I've known for years, and most of which are east-coasters; and the hobby has grown exponentially in the meantime. Other people can go ahead and play the game, but it's not worth anything to me without the people around me in '75.

2) The preponderance of Wargamers in the hobby had plenty to do with my wanting to get out. Nobody gives a damn about having fun anymore, with rare exceptions, or press, or articles or anything. It's all just "Game, game, game," and the 'zines are rigged for that kind of player, too. Look at the high playing 'zines in this years Leader Poll...warehouse 'zines are the idea of the future, and "I want no part in it."

3) College is coming up. That's self-explanatory, of course. I've always had a completely packed schedule, and that isn't going to get any better...

4) Inflation has taken its toll on the hobby. Early on in this article I briefly mentioned how the pri-

ces in this hobby had gone to astronomical heights. The postal "service" has deteriorated steadily, all the while raising its rates. It's gotten to the point that I feel like an asshole for letting them screw the consumer. It just makes me mad as hell to empty my wallet on the country every time I want to buy a few stamps. Not just the USP"S"; everything has gone up. I believe that EGGNOG is the only 'zine which has had the same rates for over two years (for the last two years, that is). When I startede pubbing, 35¢ was not cheap...today it's as cheap as it gets! The 80¢ issue of a Diplomacy 'zine has appeared, and 70-75¢ is not uncommon. I can't afford that. Sorry, but I get Newsweek for a fair shake less than that! Prices are simply exorbitant. It's not worth continuing.

5) I've grown tired of the constant pettiness and small thinking of some of the people in the hobby. There are some incredibly huge egos out there (bigger than mine!) and they want to spoil what little fun can still be had in the hobby. I wan't miss them a bit -- and they know who they are.

6) It's simply no longer the same hobby I joined in 1970. It's entirely different, and I happen to prefer the old way to the new. Some people no doubt enjoy themselves more now than they would have ten years ago...and that's their privilege. But I don't like the face of the new hobby.

There are other, less significant reasons, like thinking that ten years in this childish hobby is more than enough in itself, or that Amy can't see wasting my time on this when I could be buying her dinner at the Lake Geneva Playboy Resort, etc. The result is the same: I am withdrawing slowly from the postal Diplomacy community. I am not folding! Publishers, don't announce that EGGNOG is folding -- it is not. It is simply not opening any more games.

I will attempt to continue games-mastering all of the current games to completion, or at least until Christmas (my tenth anniversary in this crazy hobby) -- perhaps longer, depending on how I feel at the time. I'll say then. POLITICIAN will continue as it always has. Perhaps the two remaining games will be combined into one 'zine with the EGGNOG games once the number is low enough. (Most of POLITICIAN's variants have ended in the last few months, and I have begun no new ones.) I will attempt to put out EGGNOG as I always have, i.e. not a warehouse 'zine, but with plenty of reading material. Several people have promised me articles lately; that should be no problem. Besides, we can always rely on trustworthy staff writer Eric Verheiden and his commentary every month. I don't know what will happen to Dave White; he's been pretty unreliable lately. John Michalski less-than-tactfully asked Dave to go over to BB behind my back; thanks, John. But perhaps I'll let Dave go if he likes, since I could probably use the extra page.

With this issue, almost all trades and complimentary copies will be cut off, as with three exceptions. I will no longer be trading. I'd like all previous traders to mail me one more issue of their 'zine, and that's it. However, remember that it's always common courtesy to send a person a sample if his name is prominently mentioned inside. I appreciate it. Most of you have been great.

Lastly, I'd just like to thank some people on the mailing list who have done their best to help me over the years. I cannot possibly thank all of my friends over the last decade; I must restrict myself to the names of people on the current mailing list. In no particular order, I thank:

Phil Cooper, Dave Bunke, Mark Berch Lee Kendter Sr., Bob Hartwig, Distmar Pfohl, Fred Davis, Don Horton, Eric Verheiden, Robert Cheek, Doug Beyerlein, Dick Martin, Fred Hyatt, Robert Stimmel, Lew Pulsipher, Rod

Walker, and Bruce Linsey. You've all been great.

I just wish I'd have quit in 1976 instead of 1980-81.

So the 'zine goes on as always, but definitely for a limited time only. Subscription fees are still only 10 issues/\$3.50, and standby positions can still be had, as they are the only way you get to play under me.

Goodbye for now; it's been great knowing most of you. No matter what it might seem like in the above article, the vast majority of current Diplomacy players are at least tolerable...it's just that the other stick out so much.

Another load off my chest.

- - - - -

MONEY AND ME AND CURT GIBSON

Maybe I won't sue the old fart after all. I corresponded with Mark Berch and many of my friends and it might not be such a great idea. I don't care about winning or losing, though sending Gibson into the depths of poverty did seem like a lot of fun. The real argument, which has convinced me, is that taking Gibby to court would legitimize what he has been doing...which most people will admit really is the work of a bastard anyway. (Pun intended). And I have a better idea anyway, which I won't divulge right now...it does have to do with my being on the east coast for the next four years, though. Should be fun. I will keep you notified. Maybe.

COMMENTS ON THE GREAT EGGNOG FAKEN

Well, we now have nearly as many people admitting to the fake as there were pages in it! Seriously, Tom Hurst says that he'll admit to this fake "as well as any other fake issue of any other 'zine in the next three months. I did not do them, but if you need a good whipping boy, I volunteer. After all, the PLO takes responsibility for every bombing of a

grocery store, so why shouldn't I take responsibility for something as harmless as a fake EGGNOG? Adds to the notoriety, if you know what I mean."

David Perlmutter writes in: "Yes I put out the fake EGGNOG. Glad you liked it. I was afraid that you would get very angry at me like John Caruso got angry at Bruce when he fakes W. We may hate each other to some degree but the element of humor need not be that far away."

I faked EGGNOG for the following reasons... 1) You were folding so I thought that it might be fun to pep up your last few issues.

2) I had nothing else to do one weekend.

Now as you may notice I did not try to make the fake look like the real thing. Why? Because I hate fakers who try to confuse the players in a game. Hmm, or is this card a fake?"

Konrad here: Yes, the card is most likely a fake; not fake card, but fake admission. I have it on excellent authority that I was correct in my guess that John Michalski did the fake, with typing and reproduction help from Francis Cooyay. All hints do point to Michalski, and the typing and repro (it was a Canadian typewriter, and obviously done by Francis). John also jokingly admitted his complicity in the fake in a card to me about three weeks ago. Unless I hear otherwise, I think I've got it now...a lot of fun, really!

KEITH KENDALL COA

Keith, the reason I didn't print it last time was that you didn't send it to me. If it was on the return address, that's not good enough... I can't check all of my incoming mail for that. Thanks for pointing it out specifically this time. Keith is now at 320 Crockett, RPI, Troy, NY 12181. He's been there since 8-26. Players in a game with him, attention!

UGL, THAT SLIMEBALL...

Just after I leave for Washington,

the rock concerts are going to line up in Milwaukee. Queen will be coming, and I wanted to see them now for ages...absolutely superb group now promoting their new excellent album, The Game. Then it's the Kinks on tour again. Their most recent album was the smash album One For The Road ("Nope, not ready yet.") Shortly thereafter, Black Sabbath (with ex-Rainbow vocalist Ronnie James Dio replacing Ozzy Osbourne) comes to push their great new LP Heaven and Hell, with the Blue Oyster Cult in tow, pushing their Cultosaurus Erectus. Gad! And that's all within a month after I'm gone...it figgers, of course.

AGROWING TREND

That editorial in EGGNOG #51 apparently has generated one hell of a lot of response. Publishers and subbers alike have written in, and the only negative comment I got was from John Michalski (letter in this issue). Thanks, guys! The only articles from which I got more response were a series in Claw & Fang on alliances and stabbing (oldie but goodie), the article on forging letters in a relatively new EGGNOG, and one of various types of east coast beers, published in Fred Hyatt's The Home Office (seriously!). Thanks again, guys.

RUNESTONE POBSUP ANOTHER GAME

John Ledger, 121 19th Ave. NE, Calgary, Alta., Canada T2E 1N9 once again has openings in his Runestone. John is one of the hobby's most experienced GMs, and Runestone itself is quickly coming out of a somewhat weak time in its life. Grab a spot before they are all full...these will go fast!

AC/DC FANS

Just heard on the radio that AC/DC is coming to town as well! They have recently released their Back in Black album...good stuff, if you're into that at all. Unfortunately, for all of us crazed

fans. Raunch & Roll fans obviously have been hurt by Bob Scott's death in London, and the new vocalist isn't as tough...but give the album a shot if you can handle the kind of music they put out. (My favorite AC/DC album is the first, High Voltage, though things like "The Jack" would send little old ladies reaching for their smelling salts...)

NORTH AMERICAN 'ZINE AND GAMESMASTER POLL RESULTS ARE NOW IN AND RANKED...

Top ten 'zines were Fol Si Fie, Volk-erwanderung, The National, Diplomacy World, Enchain Macha, POLITICIAN, Why Me, Brutus Bulletin, The Dragon & The Lamb, and Voice of Doom. EGGNOG was found hiding out at spot #17, with a score of 6.89, with 36 people voting. Ultisent (Gibson's ragful of lies) finished dead last with a score of 1.20, below things like Tretick's Le Front du Fraud.

I must admit that I'm most disappointed. Naturally I'm proud of POLITICIAN's score (tied for 5th), but what peeves me is EGGNOG's score. It doesn't make a bit of difference now that I'm getting out of the hobby, but I asked John to confirm a hunch I had...and I was right. People either voted very highly for the 'zine, or gave it a very low mark. The high marks will explain away why I got 2nd place (behind Diplomacy World) in Dick Martin's Retalliation 'zine poll

a few months ago. The low scores can be explained away by my own personal arguments with people in the hobby. It has come to my attention that people are voting for 'zines which they don't regularly receive (say, if Cooryay votes a -1 for EGGNOG, and he hasn't seen an issue in over a year, .e.g.), and I don't like that. It's called dishonesty, and it stinks. Alson I don't know for sure but am willing to bet that people who don't necessarily like me personally (take David Perlmutter -- please!) would in this case give EGGNOG a zip score no matter what they think of the 'zine. Oh well, you can't win them all I guess. I just think that some of the 'zines above EGGNOG did not deserve to be there. Others like Claw & Fang, Retalliation, etc should have been much higher, too. For the Crossroads Press International, there will not be a next time. At least not this time!

On Gamesmasters, I scores higher: 7.88, quite acceptable to me. Tied for first were Don Ditter (I don't know how good he is) and Eric Verheiden (superb GM). Doug Beyerlein, who I feel is the Very Best Gamesmaster In The Business, was rated 3rd (9.33). (I've played under Doug for years now, in EPGLART, and it is the best GM'd 'zine I've ever come across. As a favor to him I joined another of his games which I'd not do if he wasn't as good

EGGNOG #54

Konrad Baumeister
11416 Parkview Ln
Hales Corners, WI 53120
United States / America

Your sub is up; hope
you'll renew

If you voted EGGNOG low in
the Ladder Poll, screw yourself.

Konr'ad's farewell speech!

Must eat out trade

FIRST CLASS MAIL

Sorry.

Scott Marley T
12682 Swidler Pl.
Santa, Ana, CA 92705

FIRST CLASS MAIL

